

Landover Hills Furor Ends Well

Search Turns Up All Mines Used by Children for Toys

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Bruce Kallgren, 10, of 7100 Shepherd St., Landover Hills, slept with a bomb under his bed Wednesday night.

In fact, Bruce slept with a bomb under his bed for the past two weeks, ever since he found it during a Christmas party at the Christ United Methodist Church at 69th Avenue and Annapolis Road, a few blocks from his home.

Bruce was not the only kid on his block to have a bomb. The aerial antipersonnel devices sold by the Naval Research Laboratory in Silver Spring to L. Douglas Shaffner, 30, a junk dealer who left them stacked at the end of his driveway, at 4611 68th Place, Landover Hills, had by yesterday become the most popular toys in the neighborhood.

It was not clear late yesterday whether the baseball-sized antipersonnel bombs, which an Air Force spokesman at the Pentagon said are similar to those that are regularly dropped over North and South Vietnam, could explode or whether they had been deactivated. Shaffner said he was certain the bombs could not explode

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Photos by James K. W. Atherton—The Washington Post

Searchers combing area near Christ United church yesterday found balls as well as antipersonnel mines.



Firemen stand watch over three cartons of mines found in Landover Hills yesterday.

Bruce Slept With A Bomb Beneath Bed

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because the Naval Ordnance Laboratory told him so when he bought them. Officials of the laboratory could not be reached for comment late yesterday.

The bombs apparently were picked up from the boxes behind Shaffner's office by children on their way to Landover Hills Elementary School. When the county fire marshal's office asked students at the school whether they had any of the bombs yesterday morning, several said they did. That touched off a search through several of their homes.

Prince George's fire marshals were first alerted about the bombs by a parishoner of Christ United late Wednesday night. The parishoner found several of the devices in the woods that surround the church and called the firemen, who conducted a three-hour search during the night and returned again at daybreak yesterday to look some more.

The firemen had found 36 bombs, scattered through the woods and in children's homes when a big break came about 12:30 p.m. Three boxes of bombs, stacked neatly behind Shaffner's of-

fice, were found by the firemen and the search was over — the source of a lot of anxiety was found.

Shaffner said later that the antipersonnel weapons "were marked inert and filled with plastic." He said six boxes of the bombs—several hundred in all—and 48 hedgehog rockets, later found by firemen, "were just in with a bunch of junk" Shaffner bought about a month ago. "I just had them there (near his house and in two other locations) because the junk yards didn't want them."

"There was nothing illegal about it," Shaffner said, because he had bought all the weapons as surplus from the Naval Research Lab. Shaffner said he had hoped to sell the bombs and rockets as souvenirs and lost about \$1,500 when he agreed to turn all the weapons over to county firemen, who in turn sent them to the Army's emergency ordinance disposal unit at Ft. McNair.

Shaffner said he thought the firemen had gotten "a little bit excited" over the weapons, although the junk dealer said he had never really considered the possibility that anyone might think the weapons were dangerous.

The Rev. John Mote of Christ United Church said he had received several calls from parishoners who said they would not be sending their children to choir practice last night because of the possibility that more bombs might be found.

Mr. Mote said he had told members of his congregation that "the bombs had nothing to do with the church" but some remained unconvinced, he said.